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General Assembly

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Sixty-first session
Agenda item 105 (e)
Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of fourteen members of the Human Rights Council

Letter dated 23 February 2007 from the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to inform you that the Kingdom of the Netherlands has decided to present its candidature for re-election to the Human Rights Council for the period 2007-2010 at the elections to be held during the sixty-first session of the General Assembly in May 2007.

Enclosed is the document containing the Netherlands' voluntary pledges and commitments, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 60/251 (see annex).

I would appreciate it if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Frank **Majoor**

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Annex to the letter dated 23 February 2007 from the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The Netherlands' candidacy for re-election to the United Nations Human Rights Council for the period 2007-2010

Voluntary pledges and commitments on human rights, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 60/251

Our candidacy

The Netherlands warmly welcomed the establishment of the Human Rights Council. As a current member of the Council for a one-year term (2006-2007), the Netherlands is demonstrating its commitment to working without prejudice with all United Nations Member States to ensure that the new Council functions more effectively, in a non-selective manner and through engagement, dialogue and cooperation. The Netherlands would like to be able to continue in its efforts to make the Council an effective, efficient and credible defender of human rights worldwide. The Netherlands is seeking re-election to the Council for a regular three-year term (2007-2010) so that we may fulfil our responsibilities in the promotion and protection of human rights.

Our tradition of promoting and protecting human rights

The Netherlands is firmly committed to the promotion and protection of human rights, both at home and worldwide. For decades, human rights have been a cornerstone of Dutch policy on foreign affairs and development cooperation. Our national constitution explicitly mentions our commitment to promoting the development of the international legal order, which includes promoting human rights. The Netherlands is a party to the major international human rights instruments and has always fully cooperated with the treaty bodies and special procedures. The Netherlands is active on human rights issues in the General Assembly, with a specific focus on combating religious intolerance and violence against women. The city of The Hague is seen by many as the "legal capital of the world", because it hosts a number of important judicial institutions, such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the International Criminal Court (ICC), the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the Permanent Court of Arbitration. The Netherlands has always been actively involved in the development of multilateral structures and is actively engaged in United Nations reform.

Our contribution to international cooperation

The Netherlands actively contributes to the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights. We are a major aid donor with an extensive development cooperation programme. The Netherlands is one of the few donor countries to meet the international norm of spending at least 0.7 per cent of its gross national product on development cooperation (US$ 5.5 billion annually). The Netherlands is one of

the largest donors to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), to the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and is actively involved in United Nations peacekeeping operations. The Netherlands also supports human-rights-related programmes at the country level, through both bilateral and multilateral channels.

We remain convinced that dialogue, mutual understanding and respect, as well as knowledge and understanding of each other's countries and cultures, are crucial components of a sensible approach to human rights.

As a Council member, the Netherlands pledges to continue to:

1. Advance the protection and promotion of human rights on the international level

   - The Netherlands participates actively in the work of the Human Rights Council. It will continue to cooperate with other United Nations Member States, civil society representatives and special procedures in order to make the Human Rights Council an effective, efficient and credible human rights instrument for the promotion and protection of human rights worldwide.
   - The Netherlands will continue to contribute to the improvement of the Council's working methods and to the establishment of an effective universal periodic review. The Netherlands is committed to constructive engagement in a universal periodic review that includes reporting and follow-up, and stands ready to undergo the review procedure when it is operational.
   - The Netherlands will continue to support the work of OHCHR through non-earmarked contributions, currently about US$ 6 million annually, giving the High Commissioner full authority to use this contribution in her efforts to implement the policy priorities of her plan of action.
   - The Netherlands will continue to actively pursue human rights in its bilateral relations, emphasizing dialogue, partnership and technical cooperation through the exchange of experience and financial assistance and the application of a human-rights-based approach. The Dutch Human Rights Ambassador plays an integral role in this cooperative approach.
   - The Netherlands will continue to strongly support engagement of NGOs with the Human Rights Council.

2. Advance the protection and promotion of human rights at the national level

   - The Netherlands is in the process of completing its ratification procedures for the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict. The Netherlands supported the recent adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention on Enforced Disappearances, and looks forward to signing and ratifying these new treaties.

- The Netherlands will continue to uphold its standing invitation to all United Nations special procedures. In 2006, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women visited our country.
- The Netherlands will continue to fully cooperate with United Nations human rights treaty bodies by submitting timely periodic reports and acting on their concluding observations and recommendations promptly and in good faith.
- The Netherlands will continue to maintain an open dialogue with civil society on its human rights policy.
- A coalition of four civil society organizations is currently in the process of identifying options and writing a paper to the government with a view to establishing a national Human Rights Institute. The Dutch parliament has expressed its support for the creation of this institute.
- The Netherlands will continue to fight the scourge of racism and has implemented a national action plan to combat racism to that end.

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Sixty-first session
Agenda items 60, 65, 67 and 111

Social development

Elimination of racism and racial discrimination

Promotion and protection of human rights

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Letter dated 26 February 2007 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the fact that the Japanese authorities are intensifying suppression on the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (Chongryon) and Koreans in Japan, creating a horrific atmosphere of terror and plunging the human rights issues of Koreans in Japan into a grave situation.

The current repression on the Korean residents across the Japanese islands reminds us of the madness of hunting Koreans during the "Great Kanto Earthquake" in the 1920s and the forced dissolvement of the "Association of Koreans in Japan" half a century ago.

Chrongryon is a legitimate organization of overseas citizens of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and Japanese brutal oppression on it and Koreans in Japan constitutes the criminal act of infringing upon the sovereignty of a dignified Member State of the United Nations.

Now, Japan, availing itself of the reform of the United Nations, is waging extensive diplomacy for a permanent seat on the Security Council.

As is well known to everybody, the Security Council is not an organization that sells its permanent seats for the highest price. It is an extreme humiliation for the international community that such an irresponsible country as Japan is vying for a permanent seat, while declining to part with the bloodstained past and turning the whole society into the right with a view to militarize the country.

I would like to take this opportunity to stress the need for all Member States of the United Nations to comprehend more accurately the dual attitude of Japan and

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firmly defend justice in deliberations of such important matters as the enlargement of the Security Council and human rights issues of developing countries.

To help Member States understand recent anti-Democratic People's Republic of Korea moves of Japan, I enclose herewith the statement of the Spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea issued on 19 February 2007 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 60, 65, 67 and 111 of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) **Pak** Gil Yon
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex to the letter dated 26 February 2007 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Japanese authorities' noisy racket of suppressing Chongryon and Koreans in Japan has reached an extremely grave phase recently.

This crackdown upon the Chongryon organization got more reckless with their search operations against the Tokyo metropolitan headquarters of Chongryon and the Niigata Agency of the Office for Visits of Koreans to Their Homeland late in November last year as a momentum, and it has gotten more brutal since the outset of the year.

The Japanese public security authorities mobilized hundred of heavily armed policemen and even armed vehicles more than 10 times until early in February 2007 to carry out search operations against at least 30 Chongryon-related facilities, including offices of Chongryon branches, Korean schools and houses of Koreans, and perpetrated a series of such outrageous acts as assaulting and arresting them for no reason.

The Japanese authorities, at the same time, set in motion reptile media to float various kinds of false reports aimed at tarnishing the image of Chongryon in a bid to frantically incite bitterness towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Chongryon in society.

This has created in various parts of Japan the same terror-ridden atmosphere reminiscent of operations for hunting Koreans as that which prevailed during the Great Kanto Earthquake and triggered off again the fascist tyranny through which the Japanese reactionaries forcibly dissolved the "Association of Koreans in Japan" half a century ago.

This brutal political suppression of Chongryon, a legitimate organization of overseas citizens of the dignified Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Koreans in Japan, members of the Korean nation, is an unpardonable infringement upon the sovereignty of our country and an unprecedented crime against humanity. As far as the Koreans in Japan are concerned, they are victims who were forcibly taken to Japan in the past under the signboards of military service, forced labour, comfort women for the army, and under other pretexts where they were subjected to unlimited plunder, exploitation, slave labour and submission of their descendants. The Japanese authorities are therefore under the historic and moral obligation to protect them.

Being the descendant of a war criminal, Abe is also to blame for the above-said crimes. He should have more honestly apologized for the crimes committed against the Koreans for several generations and compensated for them more fully than any others. He, however, has taken the lead in all the criminal anti-Chongryon campaigns in a bid to destroy it during the tenure of his office. We cannot but take special note of this fact.

By becoming ever more zealous in the frantic crackdown upon Chongryon, oblivious of his position and face of being "prime minister", Abe seeks to make his

"cabinet appear hard-line" in a bid to save his short-sighted hard-line diplomacy from failure and stop his support rate from declining, and thus wrest a sort of "concession" from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It is nothing but a daydream to try to gratify his political greed in such a mean way.

The servicepersons and people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will never remain a passive onlooker to the Japanese authorities' outrageous suppression of Chongryon and Koreans in Japan. The Abe group will have to pay dearly for this.

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Security Council

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General Assembly
Sixty-first session
Agenda items 87, 90 and 93

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East

General and complete disarmament

The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East

Identical letters dated 27 February 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to send you this letter regarding the danger represented by Israeli nuclear capabilities, on behalf of the Arab States Members and Observers of the United Nations (the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, the Republic of Tunisia, the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Republic of the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Republic of Iraq, the State of Qatar, the State of Kuwait, the Lebanese Republic, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Kingdom of Morocco, the Republic of Yemen, the Sultanate of Oman, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, the Republic of Djibouti, the Union of the Comoros, the Somali Republic, the Kingdom of Bahrain and the State of Palestine (observer)).

1. The Arab States Members and Observers of the United Nations express their deep concern and grave uneasiness over reference made in Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's interview with German television on 11 December 2006 to his country's possession of nuclear weapons, considering it "not to be the first country in the Middle East to produce nuclear weapons"[1] and using the pretext that Israel does not pose a threat to neighbouring States as does Iran.

2. Although this declaration comes as no surprise, in view of the Arab States' and international community's previous knowledge of the almost certain military nature of Israeli nuclear programmes, the significance of this statement is that it constitutes the first Israeli declaration to come from such a high level, and as such represents a

[1] *Translator's note*: I believe the intention here is to quote the Prime Minister's statement that "Israel will not be the first country to introduce nuclear weapons to the Middle East".

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new confirmation of international and Arab suspicions regarding Israel's nuclear capabilities.

3. The Arab States consider Israel's possession of military nuclear capabilities to represent a clear violation of the will of the international community embodied in General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on the threat of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East, in particular Security Council resolution 487 (1981), which calls upon Israel urgently to place its nuclear facilities under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and notes that Israel has not adhered to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It is also a violation of resolutions on the establishment of a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the Middle East, the provisions and objectives of the NPT, and the resolution on the Middle East issued by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. This is in addition to it conflicting with initiatives calling for the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, in the Middle East, of which the most recent was the Arab initiative of 2003 which is still in blue before the Security Council.

4. From another perspective, the declaration by the Prime Minister of Israel regarding his country's possession of nuclear weapons highlights how important it is for the various multilateral international forums, above all the General Assembly, the Security Council and the IAEA, to undertake their responsibilities effectively, seriously and without delay, in accordance with relevant resolutions, to confront this grave threat to international and regional security in a way that is reflected in practical steps regarding existing cooperation programmes with Israel in the nuclear area.

5. The declarations by Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel and other declarations reconfirm the fears of the States of the region and the entire international community about the danger threatening international security and peace. At the same time, the international community remains powerless to induce Israel to accede to the NPT, to which all the Arab States have acceded, and to place its nuclear facilities under the IAEA comprehensive safeguards system. This reveals clearly the double standard that is being followed in the region in accordance with political interests, which is also reflected by the obstruction of the draft resolution put forward by the Arab Group to the fiftieth session of the IAEA General Conference under this agenda item. This is unacceptable and cannot continue.

6. The Arab States reserve their right to take all necessary measures to deal with the threat represented by Israeli nuclear capacities through the various decision-making agencies of the United Nations and related frameworks.

7. Finally, we ask that the text of this letter be circulated among the Member States as a document of the Security Council, and of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 87 and 90.

(*Signed*) Abdullah Ahmed **Al-Murad**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the State of Kuwait
to the United Nations
Chairman of the Arab Group